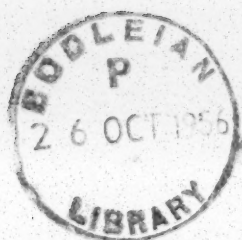


Vide fin.
EQUALITY NO LIBERTY;

OR,
SUBORDINATION
THE
ORDER OF GOD,
AND
THE WELFARE OF MAN.

BRITONS, beware, be wise, take care;
The blind eat many a fly. CHAUCER.

LONDON:
PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1792.



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EQUALITY NO LIBERTY, &c.

I AM a *freeman*, and dare, *at present*, to address myself to freemen. Thank God, there are, as yet, no political slaves in these kingdoms. Our excellent laws allow of none.

I appeal to every man, who is *not* an *Atheist*; that is, to every man, who believes there is a God, that he hath commanded peace and order, and that he will condemn the violent and unruly.

I call upon every man, who feels the milk of human kindness in his heart, and who is not yet arrived at the brutal pitch of laughing at distress and murder; who knows the compassions, as well as courage, of a true Briton; who cannot, therefore, triumph in the misfortunes of an individual, and much less in the miseries of multitudes and nations.

As to the men of *no religion*, I leave them to the just judgment of God, who will take care of them in due time; and as to those of *no humanity*, whose tender mercies are cruel, and who can dance in a slaughter-house of mankind; it is the object of all laws, and the common interest

of all society, to keep such wild beasts from doing harm.

The favourite cry of the day is for LIBERTY. Let any man in these kingdoms shew me *the slave*, the single person who is not protected from tyranny and violence, the human being who cannot claim and find the protection of just and equal laws. Liberty is taken from none, but those, who, in some sense, are trampling upon others. Every man in this country hath as much liberty as he can enjoy, consistently with his own good and the good of all about him. If he would have more liberty than this, he deserves to be considered as a tyrant and traitor to mankind.

The real contention, therefore, is not for Liberty; for Britons possess more of this than any people in the world; but for a principle, inconsistent with Liberty and subversive of it, for a pretended EQUALITY, which never did exist in the world, which cannot exist in the very nature of things, and (what is more) which God never meant to exist in his whole creation.

Let any man shew me, if he can, two things, in all its parts and properties, exactly alike. In every species there is a difference, in every object

ject some distinction or inequality. No two leaves of the same tree are precisely similar, no two animals of any kind, no two children of the same parents, no two men upon the face of the earth. It is likewise too plain to be denied, that, great as the difference of the outward frame is, the difference or inequality of minds is far greater. Providence hath ordered it to be so, for wise and good reasons; and no opposition can be made to its designs, without confusion or ruin.

Our religion teaches us, that even in heaven itself there are distinctions and inequalities, and bids us look up to the *stars* for the proof or figure of this great truth, which, though all bright and glorious, yet greatly *differ one from another in glory*.

All this arises from the very nature of *order*. For what is order, but the placing one thing in a series or course before or after another? Without this, there could be no harmony, no beauty, no use, no happiness. All would be chaos and confusion; without advantage to the creatures, without glory to the Creator.

As our religion teaches, that God is the Author of order, and not of confusion; so common sense may convince us, that the pretended EQUA-

LITY of some modern half-learned speculatists, is founded in disorder, and as absurd as it is impracticable.

If *all men are born equal*, as we are told, they must be born equal in *talents*, or equal in *authority*; for to say, they are born to equal privileges of *nature*, that is, to eat, drink, and sleep, or to the common functions of animal life, is, I suppose, too ridiculous to be questioned. And it is almost as ridiculous, though abundantly more dangerous, to maintain, that all men should have an equality of *property*; since the very attempt to realize this impracticable notion would plunge all society into distress, root up the very causes and means of industry, which cannot proceed but upon wealth *gotten* and labour *getting*, and let loose the idle hand and iron heart of the ruffian upon the defenceless and most useful members of the community. And after all the inequality must subsist, though in the ruffian's hand, till a dismal level should finally appear in the equality of poverty, and in a horrid complication of public and private wretchedness.

That they are born with *equal talents*, the wildest philosopher of the times, the boldest materialist who can deny the spirituality and immortality of the soul, or the veriest dunce who

ever saw two men in his life, will never pretend to affirm ; or if they could affirm it (for philosophers and fools have affirmed all sorts of things) could never get it into belief against the common experience of mankind.

That they are *born equal in authority*, is a falsehood as glaring as the other. The child is subordinate to the parent, and born dependent upon his love and abilities for protection and support. And if he dare to transgress a certain commandment, which some men seem to have forgotten, as well as all other commandments, he violates the order of Providence, overturns the peace of his family, and sooner or later brings distress upon himself. A son, therefore, is not born equal in authority to his father, but under his rule and dominion : and the father himself is under an higher dominion, and answerable to superior powers for his conduct towards his child. In short, if we examine the whole chain of order, we may find it to be a solid truth which the divine Wisdom hath declared, that all *power belongeth unto God*, and may be traced from him and to him.

Every person is also born under government ; or else he has the curse and misfortune of a savage. But if he be born under authority or government,

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it is nonsense to say, he is equal to it, and rebellion to declare, that he will overturn it.

But "all the people may do this, for all power is derived from the people." Let any man shew me God's direction, and I will hearken to him; but if he says this from his own head, or from heads no wiser than his own, I may hesitate, whether I shall make an article of his opinion an article of my faith. Supposing, however, for argument's sake, that *all men* are born in equal authority, and that *all the men* are to make the laws, without any regard to antecedent rules; how is this to be accomplished? It is confessedly impracticable *in their own proper persons*. All the men of a nation cannot assemble together for any such purpose. It must be done then by *delegates* or *representatives*, who, though but comparatively few, shall speak and make laws for the whole. Here then, in an instant, we lose our *equality of power*. It is no matter who are the representatives; they are our *superiors* if they are any thing; and we, the great *mass* or *body*, must submit to their rules, as those of our *head*, or there can be no law or management existing. If we choose one man rather than another to represent us, we may choose him either for the considerations of
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his weight in the opinion of the world, for his wisdom, or his wealth, or for something in which he is more able to undertake for public welfare than we ourselves. And now again we give up *the equality of talents* with the aforesaid equality of power: and we do it wisely too, in this instance, as in many others. For it may be easily conceived, that a statesman, one bred to the study of the laws, and the knowledge of the power and resources of nations, may manage our *public interest* for us with ability and success; which, if left to *all*, could never happen. In the same manner our mechanics, or physicians, or advocates, can execute our *private* affairs, which, with implicit confidence, we put into their hands, when they would come to nothing in our own. A whole people cannot give counsel to themselves, any more than an individual can help himself in all things. They must trust their affairs into other hands, and those hands necessarily must be few; and, if those few are wise and honest, it is plain enough, that they will do better for them than they can do for themselves. If the whole ship's crew turned pilots and captains, it is easy to see what would soon become of the vessel.

Here then is *government*; the wisdom of a few,
directing

directing the strength of the many. And the strength of the many must be given up to the wisdom of the few, or else there is an end of all government, and consequently of public prosperity. They have one general interest; and the man, who would presume to counteract the wisdom of a government, or to divide the strength of a people, is a rebel to the one, and a traitor to the other, and deserves the execration of God and man.

What becomes then of our philosophical reveries, which *despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities*? What sort of counsel and strength do they yield us? "If all men were equal to-day, they would be unequal to-morrow," is a proverb, like other proverbs, founded on long and universal experience. The old story, therefore, of the belly and the members will serve for an answer to us now, as well as to the republicans of Rome above two thousand years ago. "The hands
 "and feet mutinied against the belly, as a de-
 "vouring lazy lubber, that subsisted by their
 "industry, was carried about by their strength,
 "and did nothing. The hands then ceased to
 "work, the feet to walk, the mouth to eat, and
 "the belly was thrown prostrate to the ground.

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“ In a very little time, the belly indeed began to
 “ pine away ; but the hands, feet, and other
 “ members decayed with it ; till at length this
 “ great truth became clear, that *all the frame must*
 “ *live and die together.*” Menenius Agrippa
 pacified some disturbers in his time with this apo-
 logue ; and it implies a full answer to those who
 would disturb our times with their mad and
 foolish pretences of equality.

The sentiment of a wise man, who lived many
 years ago, is amply justified by some modern
 proceedings. “ Nothing,” says he, “ makes men
 “ break out into greater irregularities, than a
 “ supposed equality or independency ; which li-
 “ centious supposition tends to eradicate society,
 “ to introduce confusion and anarchy, to justify
 “ rapaciousness and brutal force ; so that all
 “ manner of enormities may be traced from this
 “ pretended liberty, this perpetual source of dis-
 “ obedience and rebellion.” If we look to a
 neighbouring nation, these words are almost a
 prophecy. There we see, in full display, the
 boasted Rights of Man. There we may behold,
 not *Liberty AND Property* as in our own happy
 land, but *Liberty FOR Property*, or the strong and
 unbridled violence of ruffians wresting away the
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civil and domestic rights and enjoyments of those who cannot think and act like themselves. There we have an admirable example of republican liberty, which hath ever united within itself the two odious extremes of tyranny and licentiousness, insulting and imposing, ravaging and murdering, without remorse, or consideration, or hinderance. There religion, not merely the popperies of the Romish church, but the Christian religion itself, is made of no account, and, by infidels calling themselves wrongly enough philosophers, and by a cruel and outrageous mob, insulted as superstitious or unnecessary. Pretending universal peace and concord, they have declared universal war against all states and governments, by inviting all people to join with them in casting off all allegiance to their present establishments. By this they meditate no less than UNIVERSAL DOMINION under the specious title of brotherhood. By an affected moderation to the lower orders, they aim to overthrow all authority but their own; and if every state could be disjointed, this old and favourite scheme of the French for the empire of the world would become less impracticable. At present, however, their internal resources are the plunder of the church;

church ; but, when these are spent, the spoils of the emigrants : and these together may serve for two or three years. As to their trade, it is reduced beyond description. Their manufactures are, in every branch, on the decline ; and their manufacturers, in many places, starving from want of employment. In short, the whole scene is crowded with poverty, disaster, confusion, terror, famine, and murder. And this they call *Liberty and Equality* ; from which, with all its curses, good Lord, deliver us !

It is now time, my honest and upright countrymen, who support our agriculture and commerce, for to you I would principally speak ; it is now time to reverse the view. Compare your own country with that unhappy land. See your trade flourishing from east to west, and from pole to pole. Every ship is bringing home riches, or carrying out the means of procuring them. Your arts and industry shine over the face of the globe, and invite the attention and admiration of all the world. You are paid more and better for your labours than any people ; are better clothed, better treated, and better fed. The means of acquiring riches are open to all, and secured to all when acquired. How many have raised

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fortunes

fortunes from almost nothing? In no country are there so many opportunities for the poor to rise, and, when risen, so great comforts and honours in the enjoyment of their properties. You have, moreover, a *settled* constitution, the work and the wonder of ages, approved by every wise man, and envied and calumniated only by your enemies. If there be royal and noble dignity in so great a state; should it not be so? What! Is an empire like this to be governed by such kinds of men, as cannot command the respect of their own little clubs? Is there to be no more public splendor in such a constitution as ours, than in the low arrangements of the puny state of *St. Marino*, or the most miserable corporation?—The meanness of republicanism is all of a piece with the rest of its principles.

But then “the *expence* of our government.”
 —Take all the subjects of the British empire together, and the Civil List will be found to cost them but little more than a shilling a head *per annum*. But much of this Civil List is applied to those expences which must unavoidably be incurred under any form of government: and as to the rest of our public expenditure, it belongs to us as a *nation*, and not as constitutionalists;
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and it must go on let who will take the lead, unless we mean to sink our country, and all its safety and reputation. Nay, all writers allow, even *Montesquieu* himself, that the expences of a republic naturally exceed those under any other form of government, and, consequently, you must in that case have more taxes. It is also undeniable, that we are now growing rich beyond example with all our imposts; and, if we conduct ourselves wisely, are in a fair train of diminishing our burdens every year. And shall we part with this certainty for an uncertainty, this happy fact for a wild speculation, in which no *good* man can get any advantage more than he has already, but which may open a door, perhaps too wide to be easily shut again, to all manner of hazards from persons, who have some hopes of plunder in a scramble, and nothing to lose? Without a *firm* and *settled* government *no commerce can prosper*: and if commerce do not prosper, can you live, as the French do, upon frogs, snuff, and politics, and think it a good exchange to leave off working for marauding? Take example, from the swarms of manufacturers now starving in France, from her declining trade, and from her numberless convulsions and

miseries. Who will risque property without security? And what security can there be, when men, who are scarce fit to govern a parish, presume to direct a realm? And such are the men who are engaged to delude you at this time. Idle speculatists, avowed infidels who scoff at God the Saviour, professed adventurers and renegadoes, almost all of them persons of light characters and small properties;—these are the men who wish to dupe you out of your present comforts and peace into their own selfish views and ambitious expectations. It is an old observation, that you will always find a republican either an artful knave, an ignorant or deceived simpleton, or a four domestic tyrant. Men of this cast cannot endure a superior, because they want to govern; nor submit to laws, because they are tyrannical themselves; nor live in quietness, because they can only thrive in discord, or, in other words, not by the *common good*, but by the *ruin of others*.

Having these views, they court the lower classes of men, and compliment them with the farce of a pretended but impossible equality, and with the nonsensical title of the “sovereign people.” But let me appeal to any man of common

mon sense among the poorest, whether he thinks it practicable, that a single parish, a little family, a common business, can be managed or carried on without heads or leaders? The question then is not, whether there shall be leaders at all, but *who* shall take the lead?—Why, certainly, the most able, the most wise, and those who have most at stake in the common welfare; not the most noisy, or most indigent. That all government is for the good of the whole people, is a most salutary truth; but that *the whole people are the governors, or the sovereign*, is an absurd perversion of it. For, if the whole people are *the sovereign*, in the name of all that is good, who are *the subjects*? Sovereignty and subjection are correlative; so that sovereignty without subjection is a contradiction in terms. If it be said, that the *representatives* or *directors* of affairs are the *servants* or *subjects*, we have then another absurdity; namely, that the servants are the masters, the subjects rule the sovereigns, who obey orders, but neither give or are capable of giving them. Indeed, it is amazing how such a fallacy should be proposed to the understandings of men and be received, when it implies all that is foolish and dangerous on the one hand, and

can answer nothing but private and ambitious ends on the other.

My countrymen, believe your own senses and the experience of all ages. There never was such a thing as a pure republic in the world ; and wherever it has been attempted, it has always ended in faction, misfortune, and weakness. Add to this ; all republican governments have ever been the most oppressive and tyrannical. It is in their very frame to be jealous, suspicious, disturbing, and cruel. An absolute monarchy, which is the contrary evil, has but one master, who too often is a lion ; but these have thousands of masters, who pry into every house, domineer in every petty district, and, like wolves, foxes, or baser vermin, harass every corner of a country. Our admirable constitution, the structure and wisdom of ages, the source (under God) of our flourishing commerce, the bulwark of public liberty, the battery against political oppression, the peculiar glory hitherto of our nation, and the envy of all the world ; this constitution protects the whole mass of society, opens a door to industry for riches and honours, enables every man to enjoy them freely and quietly, brings the highest into just submission, raises up the lowest

from undue contempt, gives force to our counsels, provides for the Christian religion, sanctions its wholesome morals, and, in short, does every thing possible to render every man contented and happy. The King, Lords, and Commons, limit each other from doing wrong, and are bound by one common inseparable interest to seek the welfare of the whole state. And is such a fabric as this to be overſet by atheistical drivellers, by minute philosophers, who neither fear God nor regard man, by designing and obscure persons, who have no talents to promote a country's peace, but only thoſe diabolic abilities which can appear in troubles? Heaven forbid! And what can we get by an exchange? Only a deluge of blood all over the land, with infidels and republicans for our governors. But is it worth while, think you, to plunge ſuch a country as this into confuſion, to ruin thouſands of families, to fill the nation with widows and orphans, to beggar multitudes of induſtrious workmen, to ſtarve the poor by ſwarms, to overturn our commerce, deſtroy our laws, and make the whole empire miſerable, in order to gratify unprincipled miſcreants, and to render every man's life and property uncertain? The generous and humane ſpirit of a Briton re-
volts

volts at the idea. It is worthy only of that nation, whom *Voltaire*, their countryman, could not better describe, than by an equal compound of the tyger and the monkey. In the *monkey*-character they have long taken the lead, and it is known well enough. And the streets of *Paris* can witness of late, how well they come up to the spirit of tygers. I will not anticipate cruel and bloody scenes in daily expectation: those which have already been transacted there, and uncontrolled too, if not authorised, by their present rulers, are sufficient to chill one with horror, while they excite disgust and indignation. For the honour of my countrymen, I will say, that I think it would be impossible for an English mob to carry a sufferer's head, and especially a woman's, upon a pole through half the length of one of our streets. Our national spirit has ever been too liberal and too compassionate, with all its failings, to countenance such gross barbarities; and I hope it will ever remain so.

Remember, my countrymen, what is written in your Bibles (and you *have* Bibles to read and may read them), that when there was *no king in Israel*, but *every man did that which was right in his own eyes*, what a miserable state the whole country

country was in, and what outrages and murders prevailed. There was no redress of wrongs but by armed force, which often commits more injuries than it heals. The histories of mankind furnish me with numberless examples of this kind, if I had room to relate them.

Let us keep this French disease then from our own flourishing and peaceful shores. Or, if we think it not to be a disease, but that all these violent symptoms, which we have heard of, are symptoms only of health; at least let us wait a little, that we may have the benefit of knowing the great and full effect of its principles, before we imbibe them. If, in seven years time, the French nation shall have got rid of all its famine, and poverty, and faction on the one hand, and shall have settled itself in peace, and order, and in the foundations, at least, of prosperity, on the other; it may then be worth our while to consider more deeply the promises and pretensions, which they have been so lavishly making. Let the year 1800 be the epoch of investigation. This is but a short date for the determination of so vast an affair; and then we shall have a clear opportunity to see, how far French wisdom, morality, and politics, will be able to justify themselves.

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We have nothing to gain by hurry and precipitation : but we may lose, and lose deeply, for we have much more at stake than Frenchmen ever had, by wrong measures. Something within that time may happen for *warning*, as well as for *example* : and it is equally fair and wise to profit by the perils of others. In the mean time, we may observe, that if our Gallic neighbours had fought after a just and prudent liberty, in which every man's property and conscience might have been protected, and in the establishment of which temperate measures had been pursued, as they certainly would have been by wise and good men; there is not an heart, perhaps, in this country, but would have wished them success, and sincerely congratulated their deliverance from arbitrary power and papal superstition. But, as they have chosen a contrary course, and, while they have overturned religion, have shut out all considerations but those of the most heated, violent, and dangerous kind ; it will be good for us to suspend our resolutions and activity, and, before we murder or expel our countrymen and abolish our constitution, to consider a little *what harm* they have hitherto done us to excite so cruel a vengeance, and *what good* we shall be able to do ourselves

ourselves afterwards, when our credit is gone, our country ransacked, our trade dispersed, our ploughshares turned into swords, our looms transported into foreign countries, and our wives and children, excepting those of a few insolent republicans, beggared and miserable. WE ARE WELL NOW: this is a FACT, which no impudence can deny. That WE SHALL BE BETTER HEREAFTER, in adopting French fury and antichristian politics, is entirely a speculation, which requires (to say nothing worse) a large share of folly and ignorance to believe, and of rashness to follow.

These hints (for the brevity of this paper will allow them to be nothing more) are well intended by one who truly loves his country, and who has no designs of his own to serve, no party to promote, no interest but that which is common to every one who feels and is thankful for the blessings he enjoys under our excellent and happy constitution; of which constitution I would say, as the famous *Paul Sarpi* did of his *Venice*, *Esto perpetua!* May it stand while the world stands!

AN ENGLISH FREEHOLDER.

Dec. 3, 1792.

Ambrose Serle.

*Heckfield,
Hartfordbridge,
Hants.*

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